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The Gazette

TOMORROW

PREVIEW

Dinosaur for all

The first blockbuster film of the summer aimed at family audiences, Disney's Dinosaur, offers mind-blowing digital technology sure to appeal to kids and adults alike.

SATURDAY

ENTERTAINMENT

Meltzer anthology

Richard Meltzer invented writing about rock'n'roll around 1965 and remains the genre's philosopher-king. Juan Rodriguez takes a look at Meltzer's new anthology, A Whore Just Like the Rest – a personal take on the music scene over the past 35 years.

WEEKENDER

Celebrating birds

The Montreal Bird Festival celebrates our winged friends this weekend. So flock to the Biodôme and Botanical Garden, where you can see more than 120 species, join a field trip, watch master carvers and take in some lectures.

LOTTERIES

Wednesday, 00/05/17

La Quotidienne-3
5-4-9 (in order)

6/49
01-13-23-36-37-48
Bonus: 16

La Quotidienne-4
8-9-9-8 (in order)

Extra
9-6-9-7-6-0
(in order)

Banco
01-03-06-15-17-19-20
22-29-33-38-44-46
48-51-53-57-59-60-67

Quebec 49
10-23-25-38-44-47
Bonus: 41

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4,000 priests say mass

POPE

Continued from Page A1

For him, it also seems to be an occasion for settling accounts – for making the journeys personally important to him, for tying up loose ends, for clearing up mysteries such as the so-called "third secret of Fatima," a part of the 1917 vision that the Vatican explained Saturday as a prediction of the pope's own near-death by gunfire in 1981.

As he passes this landmark birthday, reaching four-score years allotted to man in the Psalms, the pope stands at an odd junction of the mundane and the spiritual.

Suffering from what the Vatican has quietly acknowledged to be Parkinson's disease, he is being inexorably robbed of movement and expression.

In this highly televised papacy, Pope John Paul's health is never far from viewers' minds.

SPIRITUAL FOCUS

Meanwhile, the pope seems more focused than ever on the spiritual and the supernatural. The details of his everyday work are left to aides, while the pontiff's energy goes into events such as the Fatima pilgrimage and his poignant farewell to the Holy Land in March.

"These are years to be lived with a sense of trusting abandonment into the hands of God," the pope wrote last year in a special letter to the elderly. "If the life of each of us is limited and fragile, we are consoled by the thought that, by virtue of our spiritual souls, we will survive beyond death itself."

The pope continues to live large, with a flair for drama. Today, he is expected to celebrate mass with as many as 4,000 priests at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, an event the Vatican says will be the largest number of priests ever to concelebrate a mass.

He also will be the guest of honour at a concert at which New York conductor Gilbert Levine will lead an orchestral performance of Franz Joseph Haydn's Creation.

But if past birthdays are any indication, he will not linger much before getting back to work.

LUCIANO DEL CASTILLO, AFP

With Cardinal Andrew Howard looking on, Pope John Paul II hugs a boy yesterday in St. Peter's Square during regular weekly audience.

"He wants to continue working, I'm sure, until the time God calls him," Archbishop John Foley, an American working in the Vatican, said this week. "And he won't give up before then."

Foley's comments are part of a steady stream of statements put out by church officials, designed to quell rumours that the pope is considering resignation or retirement.

But at 80, the pope has passed the age limit at which cardinals become ineligible to vote in papal elections. And though the pope, technically the bishop of Rome, has long since determined that the rule does not apply to him, Catholic Church law requires all other bishops and archbishops to submit their resignations at age 75.

Beaudoin overboard: Liberal

MERGERS

Continued from Page A1

Kandyba said the government should remember that "these citizens also vote in provincial elections."

The referendum and public consultations are to be held June 14-18, timed to coincide with referendums planned by 29 North Shore municipalities.

Some West Island suburbs have ruled out a vote on the new amalgamation. Beaconsfield, already part of the Montreal Urban Community, will not hold a referendum, said manager Jacques Des Lauriers.

But Baie d'Urfé town manager Richard White said a referendum is a possibility. "It's one of the strategies that have been discussed."

The talk of referendums was intensified by Language Minister Louise Beaudoin's statement Tuesday that municipal mergers, particularly between Montreal and its bilingual suburbs, will promote the francization of the island of Montreal. The island is an important symbol in the fight to protect French, she said.

> **"By doing this, she will create stronger resistance to mergers."**

Bilingual status, which 14 of the island's 28 suburbs and Pincourt and Hudson have, allows them to provide municipal services in English as well as French.

In Quebec yesterday, Beaudoin toned down her comments, saying she had spoken in the conditional tense, outlining what would happen if bilingual suburbs merged with Montreal.

Beaudoin said no decision on mergers has been made and the government will wait for the recommendations of an investigative committee before making any. She refused to express her opinion of Montreal Mayor Pierre Bourque's "one island, one city" idea.

However, Beaudoin reiterated that there is no question of turning bilingual suburbs into bilingual districts of Montreal. If a bilingual municipality merged with another, the new municipality would have to pass the test to keep its status.

And she outlined again her plan to make that test a bit harder to pass.

Currently, the law says a municipality can obtain bilingual status if most of its residents speak a language other than French. However, it does not spell out whether that means one single language, or all languages other than French. Nor does it say how to determine what language residents speak.

Yesterday, Beaudoin confirmed that she plans to table legislation in the fall correcting "an anomaly" in the law. Her amendment will spell out that in the future, most residents of a municipality must list English as their mother tongue to qualify for bilingual status.

However, there is no question of revoking bilingual status for those municipalities that already have it, she said emphatically.

"There is no question of applying it retroactively. It is not the past that is at issue, but the future.

"The criterion for obtaining the status of a bilingual municipality will be mother-tongue English rather than what is written in the charter, a language other than French."

A town's bilingual status can also be an important element in whether immigrants integrate into the French community, Beaudoin argued. "Integration is school, it is work and, obviously, it is community life in a city."

Liberal language critic Pierre-Étienne Laporte accused Beaudoin of sabotaging government plans to encourage mergers by announcing plans to tighten criteria for bilingual status.

"In doing this, Madame Beaudoin is not helping her colleague (Municipal Affairs Minister) Louise Harel," said Laporte, a former head of the Office de la Langue Française. "Because by doing this, she will create stronger resistance to mergers."

Laporte said Beaudoin is opening up an issue that does not have to be opened up, because she and other Parti Québécois members are gripped by "identity panic."

It has never been demonstrated that bilingual status affects the integration of immigrants, he said.

Beaudoin's comments have also put Bourque in hot water. The Montreal mayor has in the past courted English Montrealers by saying suburbs could retain bilingual status.

On Tuesday night, councillors of Bourque's Vision Montreal Party united to defeat, 24-8, an opposition motion that would have supported official bilingual status for the nation's capital.

The new Ottawa is to encompass three francophone suburbs, including Vanier, that now offer municipal services in English and French.

Opposition Councillor Marvin Rotrand, who voted for the motion, faxed *The Gazette* a letter to Bourque from Vanier Mayor Guy Cousineau, thanking Bourque for his support for bilingualism in the new Ottawa.

"I don't understand Bourque's private commitment to bilingualism ... and his ability to vote against exactly that in council," Rotrand said.

Madeleine Champagne, an aide to Bourque, said she could not confirm that Bourque had supported Cousineau's wish to retain bilingual services in the new Ottawa. She said Bourque will make a statement today.

Alliance Quebec issued a statement yesterday condemning Beaudoin, saying the government is trying to gradually dismantle English-language and bilingual institutions.

"Louise Beaudoin has proven once more that her anglophobic fanaticism has no bounds," it said. "Beaudoin (has revealed) her intention to use municipal mergers as a means of removing the bilingual status of municipalities on the island of Montreal."

CORRECTIONS

$80-million cost

A story in yesterday's *Gazette* said Quebec's 18 regional health boards cost $800 million a year to run. In fact, the administrative cost is about $80 million.

Idea came to Kay

Because of an editing error, a story in yesterday's *Gazette* about the First Fruits 2000 Anthology and Agenda book launch said that Barbara Kay and Monique Polak came up with the idea for the book 15 years ago. In fact, Kay was the one who had the original idea.

The Gazette regrets the errors.

Schools in 'Faustian bargain'

RESEARCH

Continued from Page A1

The Boston-based journal is widely regarded as medicine's most distinguished periodical.

Angell, the journal's outgoing editor, acknowledged that rising research funding from biotechnology and drug companies has helped lead to dramatic advances against many diseases in recent years.

At the same time, she said, medical schools have struck a "Faustian bargain" with the industry.

She said industry representatives are lavishing giveaway products, other gifts and trips on doctors. She said speaking and consulting fees, along with other compensation, are subtly swaying researchers toward more favourable findings on products of companies making the payments.

PROPOSES COMMON CODE

She said researchers may also be focusing on trivial – but marketable – differences between similar drugs.

As a remedy, she said, major medical schools should adopt a strong, common code for conflicts of interest, banning some writing and speaking arrangements and stock ownership in companies making the products under study.

She said drug companies should not promote products and offer gifts to students and doctors at teaching hospitals. And she suggested that researchers' consulting income could go into a common research pool.

Jeffrey Drazen, an asthma researcher at Brigham and Women's Hospital, has been named to replace Angell, probably later this year.

Drazen's own ties to the drug industry came under scrutiny Feb. 24 when the journal disclosed that it had published 19 articles on drug treatments without disclosing the authors' industry links. One of the authors was Drazen, who had accepted grants or an advisory role at eight companies.

SUGGESTS BALANCE

Angell pointed to a study of depression treatments in the latest issue with an unusually long list of potential conflicts. Its lead author, Brown University psychiatrist Martin Keller, said in an interview that industry money was badly needed for the large study of 681 patients at 12 sites.

He said the personal integrity of scientists helps resist conflicting pressures, and he suggested "a balance between what's reasonable and fair – and what would be so overly strict that it would be restrictive."

His study was funded by drug-maker Bristol-Meyers Squibb. Company spokesman Tracy Furey said she does not feel that providing research grants necessarily influences the outcome of medical research. Neither she nor Keller would discuss details of personal compensation to researchers.

Michael Werner, a lawyer for the Washington-based Biotechnology Industry Organization, said disclosure of financial ties and government regulation sufficiently protect the public. He said companies have every reason to shun poor research because of the liability and the bad publicity that could result from a recall.

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